

# **Managing Mobility in Practice: Empirical Studies of the Everyday Practices and Technology Use of Film and Television Freelancers**

By Kirsten Sadler

Interaction Design and Human Practice Laboratory

School of Software

Faculty of Engineering and IT

University of Technology, Sydney

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## **Certificate of Authorship**

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Candidate

I dedicate this thesis to the two boys I hold very dear to my heart, my husband Rob and my son Griffin.

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Let us therefore say rather, borrowing a term from other works, that the life of consciousness – cognitive life, the life of desire or perceptual life – is subtended by an ‘intentional arc’ which projects round about us our past, our future, our human setting, our physical, ideological and moral situation, or rather which results in our being situated in all these respects. It is this intentional arc which brings about the unity of the senses, of intelligence, of sensibility and mobility. (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p.157)

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## Glossary of Terms:

ACM	Association for computing machinery
AI	Artificial intelligence
Caller ID	Caller identification
CSCW	Computer Supported Cooperative Work
DOP	Director of photography
HCI	Human-Computer Interaction
ICTs	Information-communication technologies
ID	Interaction Design
IDHuP	Interaction Design and Human Practice Laboratory, UTS
IJHCS	<i>International Journal of Human Computer Studies</i>
IM	Instant messaging
NVivo	NUD*IST Vivo
OH&S	Occupational health and safety
PD	Participatory Design
SMS	Short message service
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney

## Abstract

Researchers in the fields of human computer interaction (HCI) and computer supported cooperative work (CSCW) have increasingly sought to understand the role that mobility takes in shaping people's actions and interactions via technologies. This thesis contributes to this endeavour by exploring the mobile practices and technology use of a type of mobile worker little considered within the literature: film and television freelancers. The thesis expands current understandings of mobile people and their practices by examining the freelancers':

- mobile practices in terms of physical, social and temporal dimensions;
- technology use, both mobile and fixed; and
- cross-contextual work and social practices.

The thesis's findings can assist technology designers in developing devices and applications that support the practices of mobile people.

Findings are provided from three studies of practice: a set of interviews; observation of the making of a television advertisement; and self-reporting kits with post-interviews. The analysis reveals insights into practical strategies used by freelancers to manage unpredictability in their lives. The research demonstrates the ways in which freelancers rely on stable social bases, rather than remote offices, to manage patterns of short- and long-term movements over time. The thesis argues that understanding the interplay of stability and change that shapes the technology use of mobile people is central to developing technologies to support their practices. This contrasts with a predominant focus, particularly within the mobile HCI literature, on mobility in terms of short-term travel and micro-interaction.

The research makes three key contributions to existing knowledge and understandings of mobile practices and technology use to inform design. Firstly, the thesis documents the practices and technology use of film and television freelancers. Secondly, it presents a set of conceptual tools to assist designers and researchers in 'thinking through' the ways in which people experience and manage their mobility in practice. The conceptual tools encapsulate the temporary durations of the freelancers'

involvements in and across social situations and the key uses of their technologies to manage these involvements. Thirdly, the thesis provides practical design insights in the form of design implications, personas and research design details of the self-reporting kit study. Together these contributions provide grounded insights into ways of designing technologies to enhance people's management of their mobility in practice.